

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**Plant Abstract**

**Element Code:** PMPOA1B010

**Data Sensitivity:** No

**CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE**

**NAME:** *Cathetecum erectum* Vasey & Hack.

**COMMON NAME:** False grama, cathetecum

**SYNONYMS:** *Bouteloua erecta* (Vasey & Hack.) Columbus

**FAMILY:** Poaceae

**AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION:** Vasey and Hackel, Bull. Torrey Bot. Club 11: 37, pl. 45. 1884.

**TYPE LOCALITY:** Bone Spring (Tornillo Cr.), between El Paso and Presidio, Texas, USA.

**TYPE SPECIMEN:** LT: US-884020. V. Harvard, 2, Aug 1883. ILT: US 884019.

**TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS:** Only species in the genus *Cathetecum*, which is 1 of 270 genera in the family Poaceae.

**DESCRIPTION:** Low tufted perennial grass with wiry, spreading, stoloniferous culms and slender, erect flowering culms 10-30 cm (4-12 in), mostly 24 cm (9.45 in). Leaves mostly fascicled, the blades short, narrow and flat, usually glabrous except for a tuft of long hairs in the vicinity of the ligule and occasional long hairs scattered on the axial surface. Spicate inflorescence branches mostly four to eight per culm, ovoid, and 5-7 mm long; rachis very short, more or less densely long-hairy. Glumes unequal, one-nerved, the large outer ones (the second glume of each spikelet) usually densely hairy at least at the base; lower, reduced spikelets with a large sterile floret below and a slightly smaller staminate floret above, these mostly 2-3 mm long. Lemmas of all spikelets similar, usually three- but occasionally five- or seven-nerved, more or less lobed, the sterile ones usually more deeply so than the fertile, the nerves usually extended into short awns, these sometimes strongly divergent; nerves of the palea often extended into awns. (Gould 1951, reprinted 1973; and Hitchcock 1971).

**AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION:**

**ILLUSTRATIONS:** B&W line drawing of plant and spikelet (TAMU, accessed 2002:  
<http://www.csd1.tamu.edu/FLORA/image/k4438600.htm>).

B&W line drawing (Hitchcock, 1971: fig. 790).

Line drawing (*in* Hitchcock 1950, *in* <http://plants.usda.gov>)

Color photo of Isotype collection (*in*

[http://scisun.nybg.org:8890/searchdb/owa/wwwcatalog.detail\\_list?this\\_id=4370871](http://scisun.nybg.org:8890/searchdb/owa/wwwcatalog.detail_list?this_id=4370871))

**TOTAL RANGE:** Known from north-central Sonora, southern Arizona, east to Trans-Pecos Texas, and south through much of Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

**RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA:** Ragged Top Mountain, Pima County.

### **SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS**

**GROWTH FORM:** Low tufted perennial grass.

**PHENOLOGY:**

**BIOLOGY:**

**HABITAT:** Over its range, *C. erectum* is common on dry, rocky hills and plains, in tropical and subtropical communities.

**ELEVATION:** 760 m (2,525 ft) in Arizona.

**EXPOSURE:**

**SUBSTRATE:** Silty to heavy clay soil on rocky, high-feldspar quartzite rubble, in Arizona.

**PLANT COMMUNITY:** Populations in Arizona associated with *Carnegiea gigantea* (saguaro), *Encelia farinosa* (goldenhills), and *Hibiscus denudatus* (desert hibiscus).

**POPULATION HISTORY AND TRENDS:** In Arizona, occasional in some areas, but dense with relatively continuous populations up to a hectare in others.

### **SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION**

**ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS:**

None

**STATE STATUS:**

None

**OTHER STATUS:**

None (USDI, BLM AZ 2005)

[Bureau of Land Management Sensitive (USDI, BLM 2000)]

**MANAGEMENT FACTORS:**

**PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:**

**SUGGESTED PROJECTS:****LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:****SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION****REFERENCES:**

- Gould, F.W. 1951, reprinted 1973. Grasses of southwestern United States. The University of Arizona Press. Tucson, Arizona. P. 154.
- Hitchcock, A.S. 1971. Manual of the grasses of the United States. Second Edition, revised by A. Chase. Volume One, in Two Volumes. Dover Publications, Inc., New York. Pp. 543-544.
- Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS). Retrieved 9/22/2004 from ITIS, <http://www.itis.usda.gov>.
- Missouri Botanical Garden - TROPICOS, Nomenclatural Data Base. *Cathestecum erectum* Vasey & Hack. [http://mobot.mobot.org/cgi-bin/search\\_vast](http://mobot.mobot.org/cgi-bin/search_vast), Accessed April 10, 2002.
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**MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS:****ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**Revised:** 2002-04-18 (SMS)  
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